



# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 152

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2006

No. 23

## *House of Representatives*

### STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN ED CASE OF HAWAII TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2006

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO KEKAHA FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Kekaha Federal Credit Union on winning the 2005 Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Award.

Chartered in 1938 to serve the employees of the Kekaha Sugar Company, the Kekaha Federal Credit Union has expanded its membership to include all businesses and individuals throughout the island of Kauai. It also acts as a Community Development Credit Union, catering to the financial needs of low-income individuals. The Kekaha Federal Credit Union has over 1,500 members.

In January 2004, the Kekaha Federal Credit Union initiated a partnership with the Kekaha Elementary School to support and encourage student achievement and raise school-wide standardized test scores. Kekaha Elementary School serves a community of 3,700 residents, dominated by low-income, native Hawaiian and immigrant families. At the school, 11% of the student body speak English as a second language, 49% are Native Hawaiian (a historically disadvantaged group), and 62% qualify for free or reduced lunches due to low-income status. Many students live in single-parent homes or face situations that are not conducive to learning.

As part of their partnership, the credit union and the school established the Maximum Communication Journal program, also known as the MAX Program. The MAX Program has become the cornerstone to learning at the school, as students must

keep a journal of class activities and homework, including notes and notices from teachers and the school. Each student is then required to have his/her parents or guardians read and sign the MAX notebook each week. This ensures communication between the students, parents, teachers, and the school.

With the incentive of prizes that include boogie boards, movie passes and bicycles, students are instructed to write in their MAX journals and have their parents read and sign it every week. In order to earn a chance to win a prize, students have to write in their MAX journals and have their parents read and sign it every week. Prizes were also given to the class with the highest percentage of completed and signed journals. Prizes are given at the school's monthly assembly. Often, parents and guardians attend these assemblies.

By all measures, this program has been a great success. The program's goal of 80% student participation has been achieved for the past four semesters and, more importantly, Kekaha Elementary School has achieved passing levels in the State of Hawaii standardized tests each of the last two times the tests have been administered.

Students and parents alike are excited and have a sense of accomplishment. Billy Smith, the principal of Kekaha Elementary School, explained: "The celebration assemblies are fun and crazy. Parents are invited to attend and the kids are happy and excited." Students have become more responsible

as they see tangible results for their MAX participation.

Dora Maxwell is recognized as one of the original pioneers of the credit union movement. This award was created to promote social responsibility among credit unions by formally recognizing and celebrating their social achievements. The Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Recognition Award is awarded to credit unions, based on seven asset-size categories, and to specific chapters for outstanding social responsibility projects in the community in which they are located.

I want to recognize and commend Kekaha Federal Credit Union not only for sponsoring this important and innovative program, but for receiving this national recognition by the Credit Union National Association. This award is just another example of the great work and strong personal relationships that our credit unions provide their respective communities, and represents a perfect union of the very best of credit unions and community service.

Mahalo (thank you) and aloha!